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The Romig Centennial Reunion

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The Reunion of John Romig's descendents and the
Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of
the Homestead on Thursday, June
Eighteenth.

An Historical Paper on the Ohio Branch of the Romig
Family by Rev. W. H. Romig of Gracehill,
Iowa, with notes, comments and
additional information.

GAZETTE PRINT
Washington, Iowa.

The Ohio Branch of The Romig Family.

THE Romig family came to America in 1732, settling first at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but soon removing thence, to Oley, Berks county, Pa. They came from Ittlingen near Heilbron in the Palatinate, Germany. Our ancestors were, therefore, Platt Deutch—low or south German people.

The name Romig was probably spelled, originally "Roemisch." The "s" and "e" were dropped, and "ch" changed to "g" in our family, though some have retained the old way of spelling the name; as, Roemich. Philip Roemich, who joined the Moravian church at Lancaster, Pa., in 1748, was probably a relation of our ancestors, although he spelled the name differently.

One of my theories, but only a guess after all, is, that the name, which means Roman, and the oft recurring Roman nose in the Romig relationship, indicates that we may be descended from one of the old Roman soldiers, who attempted to conquer Germany in the days of the Cæsars. But that is only a possibility. So far I have only been able to trace the records of our direct ancestry back, with absolute certainty, to April, 1713, but with relative certainty, to the 13th of February, 1689.

John Adam Romig was, in all probability, the father of Frederick Romig, who, beyond question, is in the line of our direct ancestry. I have the record of two sons of John Adam Romig; Henry Romig, born February 15, 1729, and John Martin Romig, who joined the Moravian Home Mission of Allemengel, June 6, 1765. The third son, the Allemengel and Oley records do not give, probably because he removed to Macungie near Emmaus, and united with the Emmaus congregation. This is the more certain because, in John Adam Romig's obituary, it is mentioned that one son resided at Emmaus. It is certain that Frederick came to America the same year that John Adam did, settled in the same place originally, was at the proper age to be the eldest son of John Adam, being born about one year after Adam's marriage, and was probably closely related. We

find his name as a sponsor for one of Henry Romig's children, John Frederick, where the sponsors were John Martin Romig, Frederick Romig, Maria Everit and Anna Romig.

If I am correct in this supposition, John Adam Romig was the first ancestor in America. He seems to have been a man of strong character and deep piety. He was born in Ruedenstein in the Palatinate, Feb. 13, 1689. His parents were George Wendel Romig and Marguerite Herner Romig, both Lutherans. He was married in 1712, to Agnes Marguerite Bernhardt. He came to America in 1732, landing at Philadelphia, where he must have remained for a time, and where his wife died. In 1733 he was married to Maria Ursula Warner. He had five sons and four daughters by his first wife, and two sons and three daughters by his second wife; fourteen children in all. Thus the Romig family in America received a good start, and their tribe has increased. Of these children, two of the first wife died before the mother, and both sons and one daughter of the second wife died in infancy; so that those of the Romig name were descended from the three sons of the first wife of Adam Romig, viz.; Henry, John Martin and Frederick, of whom Frederick was the eldest. At the time of Adam's death, the record reads, "There remained three sons, members of Allemengel and Emmaus; six daughters, sixty-six grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren—eighty-seven descendents. He died July 11, 1768, aged 79 years, five months and two days, and is buried at Allemengel, Berks county, Pennsylvania. He had been Vorsteher or Warden in the Lutheran church. His son, Henry, became a members of the Moravian church in 1758. His father at first was not in favor of it. He was present, however, at the Synod at Gnadenhutten, on the Mahoney, and became greatly attached to Bishop Spangenberg. In 1762, he was received as a member of the church at Allemengel, by Bishop Peter Boehler, who had such a profound influence in the conversion of John Wesley. It is recorded of him, that he was kind to those in his employ, was an honored

and beloved father in the congregation, and was greatly respected in the neighboring townships.”

The third ancestor, of which we have record, was Frederick Romig, Sr. He was born at Ittlingen in the Palatinate, near Heilbron, April 4, 1713. He came to America, probably, with his father and brothers in 1732, landing at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and removing thence to Oley, Berks county, Pennsylvania. Originally, he was a Lutheran; but he joined the Moravian church at Emmaus, Pennsylvania, November 13, 1764. Thus began the direct connection of this branch of the Romig family with the Moravian church, which is maintained by many of their descendants to the present day. The family owes a debt of gratitude to that church and to its early home missionaries. Frederick Romig was married on Christmas, 1737, to Catherine Siegfried. She was probably the oldest American in our ancestry, as she was born at Oley, Pennsylvania, in 1719. She united with the Moravian church at Lynn, Berks county, Pennsylvania, in 1760. Frederick Romig was a farmer. Some other members of the Romig family were surveyors by profession, and it is said, held office under the British government, and followed their professions in Lehigh and Northampton counties, Pennsylvania. Frederick removed from Oley to Macungie, six miles from Emmaus, Lehigh county, Pennsylvania, and died there at 3:30 p. m., July 6, 1783. His wife died October 7, 1793. Both are buried on the Macungie farm. They had twelve children, of whom, our ancestor, and the fourth in line of descent, was the sixth.

John Frederick, commonly known as Frederick Romig, Jr., was born July 22, 1747, the son of Frederick Romig, Sr., and his wife, Catherine. He was a miller by trade and had a flour and feed mill on the Little Lehigh, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Emmaus, which is still in use and known as the Romig mill. He was twice married. His first wife was Elizabeth Knause. Her father was Sebastian Knause, the founder of Emmaus, now a town of some importance, with

a population of 3000. Thus we are related to the Knause family, well known in this community, as also at Emmaus and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. His second wife was Anna Catherine Transue of Salzburg township, Lehigh county, Pennsylvania. The witnesses at the baptism of Frederick Romig, were Henry Romig and Lewis Andreas, another well known name in this community. Frederick Romig died August 24, 1794, and is buried in the Emmaus cemetery, in grave No. 102. The record says, his corpse "Wurde von einem ausserordentlich starken leichengefolge auf dem gottesacker begleitet." We should simply say, there was a very large funeral. Rev. Mueller preached the funeral sermon on the text, Isa. 55; 6-7. The funeral notice speaks of his triumphant death in full assurance of faith. Frederick Romig was the father of nine children, of whom our ancestor, Grandfather John Romig, was the second in age and fifth in line of descent. The record of all these I have not been able to look up; but some of them were known to the oldest among us; nor can I name all of them. One son, Abraham Romig, lived at the south part of the town of Tuscarawas, on a farm and in property formerly owned by Charles Minnich. His sons and daughters as far as I can name them were: Henry Romig, Sr., of Oldtown Valley; Jacob Romig, formerly living near the old site of Wave Mills, near Tuscarawas; Abraham Romig, Sr., formerly living at Pike Run, Tus. county, Ohio; Frederick Romig of Center Point, Iowa; Lydia, wife of John Clewell; Catherine, wife of Felix Fenner, Sr.; Mary, wife of Elijah Fenner; Susan, wife of Joshua Miksch of Gracehill, Iowa; and Hannah, wife of Henry Shaffer. These are the children of Abraham Romig. As far as I know, they have all passed away with the exception of Mrs. Mary Fenner, Mrs. Susan Miksch and Mr. Frederick Romig, who are venerable old people, today. Hannah Shaffer was the youngest, and made her home for a number of years with Grandfather John Romig.

Jacob Romig of Port Washington, was another son of Frederick Romig. I cannot give all the children's names in this family. One son, Jeremiah, died in the south. One son, Josiah, died at Port Washington. One daughter, Sarah, was married to Mr. Godfrey Wheeland. One daughter was married to Samuel Rehmel, Sr., first, and later to John Simkins. One daughter was married to James Worth, and there was a son by the name of Jacob.

Another daughter of Frederick was Elizabeth, wife of Jacob Meyer. Her children were Edward Meyer, a Methodist minister; Jacob Meyer of near Tuscarawas; John Meyer of Gracehill, Iowa, and Mrs. Isaac Blickensderfer of Gnadenhutten.

Another daughter of Frederick Romig was Nancy, who married John Beitel of Nazareth, Pennsylvania. The other children of Frederick Romig I have so far not been able to trace. They have all passed away, and most of their children are gone; but their descendants are numerous and widely scattered.

John Romig, the second child of Frederick (and his wife, Elizabeth), our grandfather, was born at Emmaus, Pennsylvania, October 3, 1774, and was baptized October 9, 1774. His sponsors were Frederick Romig, Sr., and Sebastian Knause. He was married to Elizabeth Boeckel of Heidelberg, Pennsylvania, on April 4, 1797. In early life he united with the Moravian church. Through Grandmother Romig we are related to the Bickels of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and the Bickels of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A number of years ago, one of the Beckels of Philadelphia, visited the Romig family here. Grandfather John Romig had his father's trade, that of a miller, probably working at his father's mill near Emmaus, and later he was the miller at Christian Springs, near Nazareth, Pennsylvania. In 1802, he purchased land in the Tuscarawas Valley. Six hundred acres were located above what is now the town of Canal Dover, Ohio, in the plains, and four hundred and eighty acres between Gnadenhutten and

Tuscarawas. This was the old homestead and is, in part, still in possession of his grandson, Theophilus Romig, where we meet today. Grandfather Romig did not remove to Ohio till the spring of 1803, arriving at Gnadenhutten, May 30. He was land poor and had to part with the six hundred acres to retain the four hundred and eighty acres. This tract was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, extending across the valley and into the hills on either side. Here in the heavy timber of the forest, grandfather and grandmother, assisted by the children whom God gave them, hewed out a home and an inheritance. By his intelligent and persistent industry, he laid the foundation for the prosperity and happiness of his descendents.

I have often wondered what manner of man he was. We have no picture of him. Photography was then unknown, and an oil painting would have seemed an unwarranted extravagance. Aunt Susan Miksch of Gracehill, Iowa, describes him as a small, heavy-set man, similar in appearance to his son, Samuel, whom many of us remember. With all his need-for toil, he did not neglect his Christian duties and privileges. He hallowed the Sabbath and lived a consistent Christian life. He seemed to have been quiet and unobtrusive; but energetic, social and kind; a man of good judgment and of well-formed character. He was one of the pioneers who opened up this beautiful valley to civilization, and helped to establish the church, the school and the civil institutions with which we are blest today. He departed this life November 30, 1835, and is buried in the Sharon cemetery. It is impossible for me to name all of his descendents or even to tell their number. Several years ago, the descendents of one son, Jonathan Romig, numbered 111. It seems to me, however, that at this reunion it is a good plan to start a book, giving the record, as far as it can be obtained, of every descendant.

The children of John and Elizabeth Romig were:

I. Gabriel Romig, who lived previous to 1860, about one mile east of Dennison, Ohio. He removed thence to Anawan, Henry county, Illinois. Some of his descendants, including his son, John, still live there. Others, I believe, are in Kansas.

II. John Romig, who died as a comparatively young man, had two children. Felix went to Colorado in 1859, near Pikes Peak and died there. Lydia is the wife of Samuel Luethi of Gnadenhutten, O.

III. Samuel Romig who formerly lived in Tuscarawas, a farmer and hotel keeper, where some of his descendants still live. Others are found in Germany, England, Mosquito Coast in Central America, West Indies, Kansas, Illinois and New York.

IV. Jonathan Romig, whose home was formerly near Tuscarawas. In the old militia days he was captain, and later, lieutenant colonel of the militia of Tuscarawas Co., while his younger brothers, Edward and Tobias, were musicians of the regiment. He had eight sons and three daughters. His descendants are widely scattered. Rev. Joseph Romig and descendants live mainly in Kansas, one family, however, live in Colorado, another in Alaska and one is in Philadelphia, Pa.

Owen T. Romig lives in Kansas; David B. Romig and his descendants, in Missouri, as also those of Charlotte Myers; Isaac Romig and descendants live in Urichsville, O.; J. T. Romig and descendants in New Philadelphia, O., and Pittsburg; The descendants of Ellen Simmers in Canton O. Lewis E. Romig and descendants in Huntington, Ind., Wm. Romig and descendants in Gracehill, Iowa, and F. S. Romig and wife in Cleveland, O. The numerous descendants of the oldest daughter, Elizabeth Alter, reside in Clay, Iowa; Union Co., Iowa; Clay Center, Kas.; Minneapolis, Minn., and in Arkansas.

V. Edward Romig, who inherited the old homestead, and whose son, Theophilos, is our host today, lived all his life at the old home, and his descendents are nearly all residents of this county.

VI. Tobias Romig, lived just across the hills from the old home on the east end of the original Romig farm. He died in 1870. His descendents reside mainly at Uhrichsville, O., and Pittsburg, Pa.

VII. Mary (Aunt Polly) wife of James Myers, lived near the old home, at the cross roads, later removed to Uhrichsville, and is buried in the Uhrichsville cemetery. She had a large family and her numerous decendants are widely scattered. The larger number reside in Kansas and Illinois. Dr. James Myers of Hutchison, Kas., is probably the wealthiest descendent of John Romig, while Martha Myers Anderson, a few years ago was widely known as a temperance lecturer. Melissa Myers Welsheimer, the oldest grand-daughter of John Romig, was probably the best known primary teacher in public schools in this county and in Stubeenville, O., some years ago.

VIII. Salome (Aunt Sally) wife of Joseph Rehmel, resided on another part of the original Romig farm, in plain view of the old home. Her descendents reside in this state and in Washington county, Iowa. One son, Tobias Rehmel, has recently been elected for the 27th year of service as superintendent of the Gracehill, Iowa, Sunday School.

IX. Elizabeth, married first to Joseph Engler, and later to David Kennedy, was the last of the sons and daughters of John Romig to pass over to the better land, at the age of ninety-two. Her home was in Tuscarawas, and her descendents live in this county and in Indiana.

It is impossible to record all who may deserve honorable mention in a sketch like this, and some worthy names may be inadvertently or of necessity passed by. The most distinguished Romig in this country was Dr. John Romig, of Allentown, Pa., the founder of the Hahneman Medical

College and Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa., and by some called "The father of Homeopathy in this country." He belonged to our kinsfolk, but how, I am not able to say.

Here is a list of the soldier descendents of John Romig in the Civil war, but I am not sure that the list is complete:

1. Hiram Romig, died in the service.
2. Jesse Romig, 30th O. V. I., a veteran.
3. Jonathan T. Romig, Co. K, 98 O. V. I., served nearly three years; was wounded at Perrysville and Chica-mauga battles.
4. David B. Romig, Co. G, 51st O. V. I., served three years, was taken prisoner at the battle of Stone River, released on parole after 24 days.
5. Isaac E. Romig, 161st O. V. I., seriously wounded by bushwhackers in Virginia.
6. Owen T. Romig, 161st O. V. I.
7. Milton Romig, veteran 51st O. V. I.
8. Tobias Rehmel, bugler 51st O. V. I. and 161st O. V. I.
9. Isaiah Romig, 171st O. V. I.
10. John Myers, veteran 51st O. V. I.
11. Jonathan Myers, 161st O. V. I.
12. Albert Myers, 161st O. V. I. and 55th O. V. I.

Of those in the gospel ministry, the following are or were ministers in the Moravian church:

1. Bishop Benjamin Romig, missionary in the West Indies 29 years and later president of the Mission Board, Berthelsdorf, Saxony, died May 31, 1903.
 2. Rev. Augustus Romig, missionary in the West Indies.
 3. Rev. John Romig, pastor at Giffords, Staten Island, New York.
 4. Rev. Clarence Romig, pastor at Brooklyn, N. Y.
 5. Rev. Herman Romig, medical missionary, and for a time superintendent of the Alaska Mission.
 6. Rev. Joseph Romig, missionary to the Indians in Kansas.
 7. Rev. W. H. Romig, pastor Gracehill, Iowa.
- All of the above are in active service.

Of ministers in other churches there are the following:

8. Rev. David B. Romig, deceased, Methodist, Mount Moriah, Mo.

9. Rev. Hiram Myers, temperance worker and minister of the Presbyterian church in Kansas.

10. Rev. Albert Luethi, in the service of the Congregational church in the south.

11. Rev. Lewis Luethi, Congregational church, Jefferson, O.

Of women, there are many deserving of mention. There are seven who are wives of ministers. Among them, stands out pre-eminently, Mrs. Edith Killbuck, who did such noble missionary work in Alaska.

Prof. Harry Luethi of Grand River Institute, O.; Frederick Romig, field secretary of the S. S. Association for Indian Territory and Oklahoma; F. S. Romig, attorney-at-law, Cleveland, O.; President J. H. McMurray of Central College, Ind., who had the good judgment to marry a Romig, are also worthy of mention in such a list.

But I must hasten to a close. I am glad that the memory of our ancestors, today is refreshed by this reunion.

The grave in the Sharon cemetery, that holds the remains of John Romig should not be forgotten. He was one of the worthy men "whose works do follow them," and whose influence goes on down the stream of time. Many communities have been benefited by the works and lives of his descendants in many departments of life. Both grandfather and grandmother were pious, Christian people as their ancestors were before them. What a difference, what a loss, what a power for evil it would have been if they had lived ungodly and wicked lives! No wealth they might have accumulated could possibly have made good the loss.

After all, it is Christian character, built upon Jesus Christ, the Apostles and Prophets, that is the mighty force for good in this world. And the best inheritance that any man can leave to his children is the sweet influence and power of a strong Christian faith and character.

Notes, Comments and Additional Information.

The reunion was in fact a Centennial. It was held one hundred years from the time John Romig removed from Shoneck, Pa., to Gnadenhutten, O., and took possession of the Romig farm, part of which still remains in the Romig name. It was intended primarily as a reunion of the descendants of John Romig, but was wisely given a wider scope. The success of the reunion was largely assured by the excellent arrangements made by the various committees and the good work done by them. They were the following:

Arrangements:—Mr. J. T. Romig, Mrs. Laura E. Romig.

Reception:—Stanley Romig, Warren Romig, Scott Myers, Alice Myers, Eva Fox, Ada Romig, Helen Cuning.

Entertainment:—Mrs. Martha McAdoo, Mrs. Lizzie Fox, Mrs. S. J. Romig, S. A. Romig, Mrs. Isaphine Romig.

Music:—A. T. Romig.

Coffee:—Mrs. Eliza Scott, Mrs. Melissa Romig, Mrs. Wm. Narney, Mrs. Hester McCreery.

It is thought that more than five hundred people attended the reunion. Many of these were friends and neighbors, but the majority were Romigs or related to them.

One hundred and thirty-four descendants of John Romig registered their names in a book on that day. Many came from a distance, others, to our regret as well as theirs, could not come. The day was a fine one for such a reunion. Mr. J. T. Romig presided at the meeting held in the large tent immediately after the rich repast so abundantly provided. Mr. M. A. Romig, mayor of Tuscarawas, made the address of welcome and Rev. Lewis Luethi, the response. The paper here given was then read. The song "When a Hundred Years have Rolled Away," was sung. Miss Grace Romig, daughter of Aaron Romig, gave an excellent reading. Rev. W. H. Rice delivered an address and short talks were given by Bishop Van Vleck. Rev. Joseph Romig, Rev. J. C. Castle and Theophilus Romig. After this had been

concluded a photograph of the gathering was taken and another one of the grand children of John Romig by Mr. Jacob Becker of Massillon, O.

Rev. W. H. Rice of Gnadenhutten, O., in a forceful and kindly speech disputed my opinion that Dr. John Romig of Allentown, Pa., was the most distinguished Romig in America. He placed Bishop Benjamin Romig first. The career of Bishop Romig was indeed an honorable one. For 29 years a missionary and then for a number of years at the head of the mission board and president of the Unity's Elders conference, the highest office in the Moravian church, he filled these offices with faithfulness and honor and did a noble work. He was greatly beloved. His death on the 31st of May, 1903, shortly after he had written a friendly letter which was read at the reunion, called forth the respect and reverence in which he was held and sympathy for his wife and children.

My information in regard to the land seems not to have been entirely correct. I am reliably informed that the original purchase between Gnadenhutten and Tuscarawas was three hundred acres instead of four hundred and eighty acres and that one hundred and eighty acres were purchased afterwards.

It should not be necessary to state that the Low German people are a very different people from the low Dutch as one newspaper calls our ancestors in an otherwise excellent account of the reunion. Our ancestors came from the Palatinate, which has an honored history as a part of the German Empire. The Dutch are an excellent people from Holland.

My paper was written originally under the impression that it was to be read on the occasion of the reunion of the descendents of John Romig. The reunion we are glad to note, took on a wider scope and the whole Romig relationship of the Ohio branch of the family were invited and were well represented. It would have been a pleasure to me to have given more time to other branches of the Romig fam-

ily if I had understood this in time to gather the necessary information.

The paper itself furnishes, after all, only fragmentary information; I believe, however, that it correctly traces our ancestry back to the seventeenth century. I am greatly indebted to those faithful chroniclers, Moravian Ministers, who wrote the old church records and to the Moravian ministers, Bishop Levering, Rev. Samuel Gopp, Rev. C.A. Hachule and Rev. W. H. Rice, who aided me meterially in gathering the facts here presented.

It is a matter of regret that so much had to be omitted from such a paper as this. As a history it is incomplete, partly from lack of time and partly from lack of information. I regret particularly that the wives and mothers could not be mentioned by their family names, and that a complete list of the present generation could not be given. What we need is a book giving the complete record of the whole family as far as it can be obtained. This can be attained now better than at any later time. It will cost both time and money to publish such a book, but it should be done. It would be invaluable to future generations as well as useful for the present.

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